



**Energy and Technology Committee  
Public Hearing  
March 18, 2012**

Submitted by Lynn Taborsak, Climate Change Specialist  
League of Women Voters of Connecticut

in support of  
**SB 450: An Act Concerning Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy**

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut is a non-partisan statewide organization comprised of over 1800 members and committed to effective public policy and the active involvement of citizens in their government. On behalf of the League, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

The League has consistently supported policies that reduce energy consumption, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources. We support measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including cap and trade programs, carbon offsets, low-carbon fuels and green building standards.

While Connecticut has many excellent programs to help people reduce their energy use, we have not provided residents who heat with oil reliable funding to upgrade heating equipment and we have not given them equal access to low-cost energy efficiency programs like the popular Home Energy Solutions program. SB 450 corrects this inequity with the establishment of a separate non-lapsing account within the General Fund specifically for oil efficiency. It will provide a reliable funding mechanism for residents to upgrade heating equipment and make energy efficient improvements to homes and buildings that use oil for heating.

It is particularly important for Connecticut since 48 percent of the homes in our state heat with oil and the average price of oil is now over four dollars a gallon. With deep cuts to federal energy assistance in December, Connecticut lost \$57 million in energy assistance funds. Even with the mild winter we have enjoyed, state residents on fixed incomes cannot afford to be comfortable in their own homes.

We need to provide efficiency programs to help residents reduce the amount of oil they use for home heating. Efficiency audits can help determine where heat is escaping, where insulation is needed, and how an investment in energy-efficient equipment can pay back with significant savings. The average oil heat customer can save up to \$768 each winter and we will all benefit from the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

While we have made solid progress on reducing industrial greenhouse gas emissions in our state, we cannot ignore the fact that one-fifth of all greenhouse gas emissions come from household energy use. Let's not leave 48 percent of our residents out in the cold. Please support SB 450.